Consulate could expand India-US trade and economic relations. It will also lead to faster processing of requests for US visas and consular services and would offer increased opportunities to enter into mutually beneficial cooperation.

Capacity to issue Visas

2753. SHR1 HARISH RAWAT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

Jhe details of the steps Government are taking to strengthen the capacity to issue visas in different Indian embassies in the world; and

if, the reply to part (a) above be in the negative, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) In order to strengthen the capacity of Indian missions abroad to issue visas, the Government has carried out computerization of visa work in Indian Missions/Posts in London, New York, Abu Dhabi, Muscat, Colombo, Islamabad and Dhaka. Computerization of visa work in missions in Kuwait, Paris, Madrid, Singapore, Riyadh and Jeddah is expected to be completed shortly. Efforts are also being made to computerize visa work in other Missions/Posts. Visa application collection work in our Mission in Dhaka has been outsourced. Government is examining the feasibility of similar outsourcing in other Missions/Posts. Additional manpower is also being made available on contingency basis as and when required.

(b) Does not arise.

Officers Discharged from IFS

2754. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of officers that have been discharged from the Indian Foreign Service during the years 1999-2005 on the basis of recommendation of the Vigilance Division of his Ministry;

(bjwhether any investigation/inquiry was held by the Vigilance Division in respect of such officers into any of the misconduct alleged against them;

what were the findings/conclusions of such investigation/inquiry in case of each such officer; and

if no investigation/inquiry has been held and no findings were arrived at against any of such officers, then on what basis such officers have been discharged from the service?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) to (d) An Indian Foreign Service Probationer was discharged from service in 2002, in accordance with the terms of his appointment, with the approval of the competent authority. He challenged the discharge order in the Central Administrative Tribunal, which dismissed his application, whereupon he has filed an appeal in the Hon'ble Delhi High Court. The matter is currently sub-judice with the Hon'ble Court.

Exchanging Lists of Nuclear Installation

2755. SHRIMATISUKHBUNSKAUR:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

whether India and Pakistan exchanged lists of their nuclear installations in January, 2006 under agreement that prohibits Islamabad and New Delhi for attacking each other nuclear facilities, while cross border terrorism from Pakistan continues unabated;

if so, in what manner it would help India closing ranks with Pakistan, and strengthening mutual ties between two countries; and

whether any steps have been taken to ente into similar under standings with other neighbouring countries, if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E.AHAMMED): (a) and (b) For the fifteenth consecutive year, India and Pakistan, through diplomatic channels, simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad, exchanged lists of nuclear installations and facilities covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attacks Against Nuclear installations and Facilities between India and Pakistan on 1 January 2006. This Agreement was signed on December31,1988 and entered into force on January 27,1991. Under the Agreement, the two countries are to inform each other on January 1 of each calendar year of the nuclear installations and facilities to be covered by the Agreement. The Agreement is an important confidence-building measure between India and Pakistan.

(c) No.